

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ATHENS 01129 051740Z

20

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /082 W

----- 067516

R 051622Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2521

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1129

EO 11562/ GDS

TAGS: ELAB GR

SUBJECT: LABOR - CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

REF: ATHENS 263

1. SUMMARY.

ELECTIONS ARE STILL TAKING PLACE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES OF THE NATIONS LABOR CENTERS AND FEDERATIONS (REFTEL). IN THE BELLWETHER ELECTIONS AT THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER JAN 19-21, THE GOVT-SUPPORTED COALITION -- ASDIS -- RECEIVED THE LARGEST NUMBER OF SEATS (12) ON THE 27 MEMBER ADMIN COUNCIL, WHILE THE SLATE REPRESENTING THE GREEK COMMUNIST PARTY (KKE) OF THE EXTERIOR RECEIVED ONLY 5 SEATS. THROUGH AN AGREEMNT EVIDENTLY REACHED WITH THE REFORMISTS (EKES) -- REPRESENTING CADRES WHO HELD POSITIONS UNDER THE MILITARY REGIME -- ASDIS WAS SUBSEQUENTLY (FEB 2) ABLE TO ESTABLISH CONTROL OVER THE NINE MEMBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE REELECTED PRESIDENT OF ATHENS LABOR CENTER, A PRINCIPAL PROBLEM IN THE NEAR AND MID TERM FUTURE FOR THE ASDIS GROUP IS THE NEED TO COOPERATE (AS IT MUST) WITH THE EKES GROUP -- WITHOUT BEING HARMED IN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ATHENS 01129 051740Z

ANY TELLING OR SIGNIFICANT WAY BY ACCUSATIONS OF THE

LEFT THAT IT IS COLLABORATING WITH JUNTAISTS. END
SUMMARY.

2. THE CONGRESS OF THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER WAS HELD
IN MID-JAN (REFTEL). AS EXPECTED, THERE WAS A
DEMONSTRATION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME UNIONS WHICH
HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY EXPELLED FROM BOTH THE GENERAL
CONFEDERATION OF GREEK WORKERS (GSEE) AND THE ATHENS
LABOR CENTER (BEFORE AND DURING THE MILITARY REGIME)
AND WHO WERE DEMANDING PARTICIPATION IN THE CURRENT
CONGRESS. AFTER DELIVERING RESOLUTION TO CONGRESS,
THAT DELEGATION DEPARTED PEACEFULLY AND GATHERED AT A
DOWNTOWN THEATRE TO DEMONSTRATE FURTHER IN SUPPORT
OF ITS CAUSE. THERE WERE ALSO SOME MINOR
DISTURBANCES DURING THE CONGRESS ON THE PART OF THOSE
DEMANDING THAT "MUNTA REPRESENTATIVES" NOT TAKE PART
IN LABOR MOVEMENT -- REMARKS THAT WERE DIRECTED
AT THE UNITED MOVEMENT OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (EKES)
REPRESENTATIVES. ELECTIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE
COUNCIL OF THE LABOR CENTER WERE SET FOR THE FOLLOWING WEEK.

3. THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER ELECTIONS FOR ITS 27-MEMBER ADMINISTRATIVE
COUNCIL WERE HELD
JAN 19-21. THE FOUR COMPETING LABOR
GROUPINGS RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF
COUNCIL SEATS: (A) ASDIS -- THE GOVERNMENT-
SUPPORTED "NON ALIGNED TRADE UNION DEMOCRATIC COALITION"
--12 SEATS (44.4PC); (B) EKES -- THE "REFORMIST"
GROUP WHICH BASICALLY REPRESENTS LABOR LEADER CADRES
LEFT OVER FROM THE PERIOD OF THE MILITARY REGIME --
6 SEATS (22.2PC); (C) ESAK (UNITED SYNDICALIST ANTI-
DICTATORIAL MOVEMENT) -- THE GROUP REPRESENTING THE
GREEK COMMUNIST PARTY (KKE) OF THE EXTERIOR -- 5 SEATS
(18.5PC); (D) PASKE (PANHELLENIC ANTI-DICTATORIAL
SYNDICALIST MOVEMENT) -- THE LABOR ARM OF ANDREAS
PAPANDREOU'S PASOK PARTY -- 4 SEATS (14.8PC). THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS (FOR THE 9 PRINCIPAL OFFICERS
OF THE CENTER) WERE ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR JAN 29
BUT WERE POSTPONED UNTIL FEB 2.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ATHENS 01129 051740Z

4. IT QUICKLY BECAME APPARENT THAT SOME BAR-
GAINING AND HORSE TRADING WOULD HAVE TO OCCUR FOR
ASDIS TO EMERGE VICTORIOUS IN THE ELECTIONS FOR THE
GOVERNING 9-MEMBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL -- SINCE IT WAS TWO SEATS
SHORT OF HAVING THE REQUIRED MAJORITY. IN A LONG RANGING
CONVERSATION ON JAN 26 WHICH LABOR REPORTING OFFICER HAD WITH
CHRISTOS KARAKITSOS (CURRENT GSEE SECRETARY

GENERAL, ATHENS LABOR CENTER PRESIDENT AND LEADER OF THE ASDIS GROUPING) THE LATTER SUGGESTED STRONGLY THAT ASDIS WOULD HAVE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE EKES GROUPING IN ORDER TO CONTROL THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER. HE ASSERTED THAT SUCH ACTION POSED REAL PROBLEMS IN THAT THE LEFTIST ELEMENTS (PASKE AND ESAK) WOULD BE QUICK OFF THE MARK TO CASTIGATE HIM FOR COLLABORATING WITH THE JUNTAISTS. HE SAID THAT THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE A CONTINUING PROBLEM DURING THE THREE YEAR TERM OF THE NEW LABOR CENTER ADMINISTRATION, AND NOT JUST FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. HE NOTED AS WELL THAT THE PICTURE THROUGHOUT THE NATION WAS GENERALLY THE SAME, I.E. CLAIMING THAT ASDIS AND EKES TOGETHER WERE CONTROLLING ROUGHLY 95PC OF THE UNIONS -- AND WERE ALSO CONTROLLING THE MAJORITY OF THOSE FEDERATIONS AND LABOR CENTERS WHERE ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN HELD SO FAR. HOWEVER, TO INSURE CONTROL AND TO EFFECTIVELY COUNTER THE LEFTIST GROUPS, KARAKITSOS IMPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO CHOICE BUT FOR ASDIS AND EKES TO EFFECT A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE.

5. THE TACTICS EMPLOYED AT THE SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS FOR THE RULING EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER ARE INSTRUCTIVE. ON FEB 2, THE SIX EKES MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS. ACCORDINGLY, WITH THE RESULTING BALANCE OF ONLY 21 ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT, THE ASDIS FACTION OF 12 MEMBERS CONSTITUTED A MAJORITY. UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, ASDIS WAS ASSURED OF A CLEAR SWEEP OF THE 9 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SEATS. THIS TACTIC WAS EVIDENTLY USED IN ORDER TO DEFLECT CRITICISM THAT ACTIVE EKES COLLABORATION HELPED ASDES TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE LABOR CENTER. THE HELP EKES OFFERED IN THIS EVENT WAS JUST AS TELLING, BUT IT WAS "PASSIVE" IN NATURE, AND PRESENTED A CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ATHENS 01129 051740Z

SHORT TERM TACTICAL VICTORY FOR ASDIS. COMMENT: ON MEMBER OF THE NEW 9-MAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN FACT REPRESENTS THE INTERIOR BRANCH OF THE GREEK COMMUNIST PARTY. THIS REFLECTS THE FACT THAT WHEN ASDIS WAS INITIALLY ESTABLISHED, INVITATIONS WERE EXTENDED TO ALL "DEMOCRATIC" FORCES, AND THE KKE (INTERIOR) AGREED TO PARTICIPATE.

6. IN THE NEAR FUTURE, THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER ELECTIONS HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN FAVOR OF THE GOVT. THERE IS NO REAL LEFTIST PRESSURE ON ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (I.E. NEITHER PASKE NOR ESAK REPRESENTATIVES ARE INCLUDED) AND TO THIS DEGREE, IT IS A BLOW TO THE LEFTIST FORCES. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE SINCE THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER HAS ALSO BEEN THE BELLWEATHER CENTER TO WHICH ALL THE OTHER LABOR CENTERS OF THE

COUNTRY LOOK FOR DIRECTION AND GUIDANCE. IN THE LONGER RANGE, KARAKITSOS NOTED THAT PROBLEMS COULD CROP UP IN THAT THE 5 ESAK MEMBERS ELECTED TO THE BROADER 27-MEMBER ADMIN COUNCIL WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SPEND "MOST OF THEIR TIME AT THE CENTER" WHILE MANY OF THE OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SHOW SUCH A SUSTAINED PRESENCE DUE TO THE TRADE UNION JOBS WHICH THEY HOLD IN THEIR OWN TRADES OR INDUSTRIES. ALSO, KARAKITSOS FEARS THAT THE EKES MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE "UNDULY SUBJECTED TO PRESSURE" BY THE LEFT THROUGH OFFERS OF BRIBES, ETC, SINCE "THEY ARE NOT OF THE HIGHEST CALIBER."

7. LOOKING DOWN THE LINE TOWARDS THE GSEE CONGRESS-- PROBABLY STILL A FEW MONTHS AWAY--KARAKITSOS EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN THAT IN THAT FORUM THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LEFT TO PLAY THE ROLE OF MISCHIEF MAKER WILL BE GREATER. HE SUGGESTED THAT ON THAT OCCASION THE EKES REPRESENTATIVES MIGHT EXPECT PARTICIPATION ON THE GSEE COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN RETURN FOR THEIR PREVIOUS COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION IN THE ELECTIONS AT THE LOWER LEVEL TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS. UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS THE LEFT WOULD HAVE A VISIBLE TARGET TO SHOOT AT AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY EXPLOIT THE CHARGE OF ASDIS COLLABORATION WITH "JUNTAISTS," IT CAN ALSO BE EXPECTED TO RAISE DEMANDS ANEW FOR FURTHER CLEANSING WITHIN THE LABOR MOVEMENT. KARKITSOS COMMENTED THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW FOR THE MOMENT HOW HE WILL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 ATHENS 01129 051740Z

DEAL WITH THAT SITUATION AND THAT HE REALLY "DOESN'T WISH TO THINK ABOUT IT NOW."

8. COMMENT: MUCH OF THE CURRENT DIFFICULTY WHICH THE ASDIS LEADERSHIP FINDS ITSELF IN IS DUE TO THE POLICY LINE TAKEN BY LABOR MINISTER LASKARIS SINCE THE AUTUMN OF 1974 WHEN HE TOOK ACTION TO OUST ALL LABOR LEADERS WHO HAD SERVED DURING THE MILITARY REGIME FROM THEIR POSTS AT THE CONFEDERATION, FEDERATION AND LABOR CENTER LEVELS. UNION LEADERS (AT THE GRASS ROOTS LEVEL) WERE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN PLACE BUT WERE TAINTED WITH THE STIGMA OF BEING JUNTA STOOGES (WHICH WAS NOT ALWAYS JUSTIFIED). THE LEFT CAN NOW EXPLOIT THAT SITUATION AND CAUSE ACUTE EMBARRASSMENT TO ASDIS AS IT SEEKS TO WOO BACK THOSE REFORMIST CADRES WHICH IT HAD PREVIOUSLY CASTIGATED.

KUBISCH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR UNIONS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ATHENS01129
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760045-0337
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760281/aaaacssc.tel
Line Count: 217
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ATHENS 263
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <29 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR - CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: ELAB, GR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006